

Board Attendees: Tim Dow – Chairperson, December Fortin – Vice Chairperson, Nancy Coffin, Scott Burns, Shelly Henry, Tamara Feener, Chad Carey

Absent Board Members: Lisa Tremblay, Robin Gargano, Greg Husband, Peter Heath and Angie Carey

Administration/Faculty: Dan LeGallo – Superintendent, Amanda Bergquist – Business Administrator

Others: Attorney for the SAU – Gordon Graham, Deb Brown (Franklin Resident) and Cathy Viau (School Board Clerk)

Tim Dow, School Board Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Salute to the Flag

Tamara Feener requested to have the phrase under public participation removed. It was stated by others that this is on all agendas. The SAU Board Policies will be reviewed and brought to next month's meeting.

Approval, SAU School Board Meeting October 13, 2015

MOTION: December Fortin moved to accept the minutes of the SAU School Board Meeting of October 13, 2015 as corrected, seconded by Nancy Coffin.

Amanda Bergquist and Daniel LeGallo were present and should be added to the Administration/Faculty as present.

On page 2, second motion, the word “of the” should be changed to “off the”.

Motion Passes – 5 in Favor and 2 Abstained (Tamara Feener and Chad Carey as they were absent)

Public Participation – Nothing

Recognitions – Nothing

Non-Public Session – RSA 91A:2, paragraph IIa—e, Personnel

MOTION: Chad Carey moved to go into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91A:2, paragraph IIa-e, personnel at 7:08 pm, seconded by Scott Burns.

Roll Call Vote – All in Favor

Motion Carried – Unanimous

MOTION: Chad Carey moved to come out of non-public session at 7:32 pm, seconded by Tamara Feener.

Roll Call Vote – All in Favor

Motion Carried – Unanimous

MOTION: Chad Carey moved to extend the contract of Daniel LeGallo for Superintendent until June 30, 2017, Scott Burns seconded.

Motion Carried – Unanimous

NEW BUSINESS - nothing

OLD BUSINESS

Update, proposed consolidation of SAU 18 Business Office with the City of Franklin Business Office

The history and overview of the topic of the proposed consolidation of the SAU 18 Business Office with the City of Franklin Business Office was given including the review of the questions posed at the September 2014 SAU Board Meeting. Consolidation and withdrawal are very different.

MOTION: Tamara Feener moved to take the tabled motion of last month's meeting regarding the item of consolidation off of the table for discussion, seconded by Scott Burns.

Motion Carried – Unanimous

Attorney Gordon Graham, representative for Attorney Barbara Lohman from Soule, Leslie and Kidder has been an attorney for 27 years. He has been consulting with Attorney Barbara Lohman and the Superintendent regarding the history of this topic.

It was stated that each school district must be provided with Superintendent Services and each entity may choose how their finances are run. Discussion was held regarding the many hurdles that may occur if finances are contracted out. All needs and requirements for both State and Federal guidelines and reports must be completed thoroughly and legally. There may be a separation of the direct line of authority. It would take a great deal of trust and very detailed and specific contract. Certifications, financial reporting and testing reports are much different for a school district versus a City/Town. Both the School and City/Town have very different requirements which need to be met. Family rights and privacy act (FERPRA – for Students and HIPPA – for Staff) could be a concern if a consolidation is done. It is the district's responsibility to meet the needs of the people within the district. Payments made for special education, transportation, etc. is very confidential as well as student and employee information, privacy could be an issue. The school lunch program requires very detailed reporting, has very strict guidelines and highly confidential. Grants for a school system are much stricter and the federal as well as auditing requirements are very different from the city. Bonding would need to continue. Student activity accounts require very specific control guidelines. Each of the entities (SAU, Hill School District and Franklin School District) is completely separate and should be treated as such. Some of the critical elements include: line of authority; city, town and school requirements do very different things; question of who is the boss. City/Town or School; who reports to whom; who is responsible to whom. It was stated not to underestimate the challenges and costs associated with the operations as they are very different entities. If done, there will be many hiccups as there are clear benchmarks for achievement for schools. There would need to be very clear opportunities for the district to withdraw from consolidation. There will more issues with consolidation versus helping each entity. It has been explored by several other cities/towns but was not deemed to be the effective choice therefore never flourished. Some of findings and concerns were: the cost was found to go up rather than down; cross training is an issue; multiple unions in place to deal with; RSA 198: 4D; Superintendent services and reporting. What is the goal and reason for some people wanting this?

Some concerns stated were:

- This is a Franklin issue as they are the ones exploring this consolidation. The SAU should not be addressing this as they are two separate entities.
- Each district is their own entity and each should have a say over their own finances and how they are run.
- Each entity operates and reports very differently and has their own strict state, federal and local guidelines.
- Statutory responsibilities
- Trustees of the trust funds are different
- Why doesn't the school manage the City's finances?
- Each entity is very complex in itself. They should remain separate as they are very different.
- Who would be in charge of hiring and firing?
- What's the purpose?
- Audits are getting close to being all caught up.
- Is there a need for a human resource specific person?
- The cost of software to work for both entities would be a cost increase
- What's the purpose of consolidation?
- Not guaranteed to be less expensive
- The SAU human resource services are divided by a combination of three people (each having their own part), they attend conferences, webinars and training for human resource topics, they are on top of reporting, and PRIMEX is utilized, free of charge, for advice when needed.
- It was requested to know if the SAU employees had any concerns and it was stated that some employees have shared concerns but are afraid to come forward to the board in fear of losing their job.
- Daniel LeGallo and Amanda Bergquist have been attending the Franklin withdrawal exploration committee meetings
- No presentation was ever given to the board regarding this matter previous regarding any benefits of such change. Some of the board members would really like to hear from the SAU employees.
- Were meetings held to speak to all involved parties and employees together from all entities
- Tax ID numbers and so many little details
- Concerns that this, if followed through with, would be a nightmare and a circus.
- Wait until Franklin makes their decision first.
- Is everyone going to keep their job? Tamara Feener stated that they would.
- If cost savings is the concern, why don't all entities come together in a buying consortium?
- There is too many other things going on within the districts, this would not be a wise move at this time.
- The overall cost would be more: equipment, furniture, attorney fees, software, moving, rental space, etc.
- Multiple contracts and retirement plans to deal with
- Clarify who is consolidating and who is not
- Statutory responsibility
- If the process continues, each entity would need to consult their own attorneys as well.
- There is a difference between a coop and consolidation.
- There are so many differences between the entities.
- Previous concerns have not been addressed and a lot more research needs to occur before a decision is made.
- Where is the savings? Or benefits?

MOTION: Tamara Feener moved to table the consolidation discussion, Scott Burns seconded.

Discussion was held regarding the fact this should not be discussed at SAU Board level any longer. If Franklin was to withdraw there no longer be a reason for the discussion. If the withdrawal doesn't happen, then it may possibly be brought back.

Motion Failed – 3 in Favor, 4 Opposed (Tim Dow, December Fortin, Shelly Henry, and Nancy Coffin)

MOTION: Nancy Coffin moved to have the discussion of consolidation end at the SAU Board level as it is an issue being explored at the Franklin Withdrawal Committee level, seconded by Shelly Henry.

Motion Passes – 4 in Favor, 3 Opposed (Tamara Feener, Chad Carey, and Scott Burns)

2016-17 SAU 18 Board Meeting Schedule

MOTION: Shelly Henry moved to approve the 2016-17 SAU 18 Board Meeting Schedule as presented, seconded by Scott Burns.

Motion Carried - Unanimous

OTHER – nothing

FINANCE

Finance Report/Expenditure Report - nothing

Audit – Amanda Bergquist gave the board an update regarding the progress of the audit for the SAU.

Budget Process 2016-17

Amanda Bergquist provided the board with a revised budgetary summary with the proposed increase of the budget to be 2.3%. The board reviewed the budget line by line. Worker's comp has decreased due to less claims. Books/Other Print Media reflects the cost of Marshal Publishing and schoollawadvisory.com. Computer Upgrade title should be changed to New Comp Equipment. The difference between New Comp Equipment and Replacement of Comp Equip. were given.

The next meeting is December 3, 2015 at 7:00 PM at the Jennie D. Blake Elementary School. This includes the public hearing for the budget.

Adjournment

MOTION: December Fortin moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 pm, Nancy Coffin seconded.

Motion Carried - Unanimous